

of sheer irreverence in Disraeli strangely mingled as in Heine with the more obvious characteristics of the Semitic temperament — a spirit of revolutionary mockery ever struggling in both with the mysticism of the Hebrew, so that they both of them appear to be the most impossible compounds of Spinoza and Voltaire; and nowhere has Disraeli given more perfect expression to this side of his complex nature than in these dialogues, because nowhere else is its expression so genial and inoffensive. His father thought them the most original of all his writings; and more than one critic since, charmed by their wit and vivacity and sparkle, their entire freedom from malice, and the spirit of innocent mischief which breathes through them, has repeated the contemporary judgment, and pronounced them to be the best things that their author ever wrote.

To Sarah Disraeli.

April 8.

I have agreed to stand for Marylebone, but I shall not go to the poll unless I am certain, or very confident; there is even a chance of my not being opposed. In the *Town* yesterday, I am told, 'some one asked Disraeli, in offering himself for Marylebone, on what he intended to stand.' "On my head," was the reply.'

I have heard nothing more from-----, who appears to have pocketed more than I should like to do. It was impossible to pass over attacks from such a quarter in silence. The only way to secure future ease is to take up a proper position early in life, and show that you will not be insulted with impunity.¹

The allusion in this passage is to a correspondence with Dashwood, the Whig member for Bucks, who in a speech at Wycombe had elaborately depicted a type of political profligacy in language that had been interpreted as applying to the late candidate for the borough. More perhaps in a spirit of calculation than out of real sensitiveness or irritability Disraeli was in these years

¹ *Letters*, p. 82.

